AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) A mold for providing an optical connector ferrule comprising:

a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber ~~accomodating~~ accommodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, the mold comprising:

first, second, third, and fourth mold units for defining a cavity for providing said ferrule;

said first and second mold units, combined with each other to define the cavity, providing opening portions toward the predetermined axis so as to provide a housing portion for housing said third and fourth mold units;

said third and fourth mold units being housed in the housing portion so as to be movable along [[th e]] the predetermined axis with respect to said combined first and second mold units; and

said third mold unit including a guide projection forming portion, at least one pin, and an engaging portion forming portion, said guide projection forming portion having an inner surface and a bottom surface and extending along the predetermined axis, said at least one pin extending along the predetermined axis, and said engaging portion forming portion being provided to form said engaging portion and extending along the predetermined axis.

16. (Currently amended) A mold for providing an optical connector ferrule comprising:

a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber ~~accomodating~~ accommodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, wherein said guide engaging portion includes a second guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said second guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said second guide projection being made of the resin, the mold comprising:

first, second, third, and fourth mold units for defining a cavity for providing said ferrule;

said first and second mold units, combined with each other to define the cavity, and providing opening portions toward the predetermined axis so as to provide a housing portion for housing said third and fourth mold units;

said third and fourth mold units being housed in the housing portion so as to be movable along the predetermined axis with respect to said combined first and second mold units; and

said third mold unit including a pair of guide projection forming portions and at least one pin, each guide projection forming portion extending along the predetermined axis and having an inner surface and a bottom surface, and said at least one pin extending along the predetermined axis.

17. (Currently amended) A mold for providing an optical connector ferrule comprising:

a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber ~~accomodating~~ accommodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, wherein said guide engaging portion includes a guide hole having an opening portion, a distal end portion, and

an inner surface, said opening portion being provided on said mating surface, said inner surface being made of the resin, and said guide hole extending along the predetermined axis, the mold comprising:

first, second, third, and fourth mold units for defining a cavity for providing said ferrule;

said first and second mold units, combined with each other to define the cavity, providing opening portions toward the predetermined axis so as to provide a housing portion for housing said third and fourth mold units;

said third and fourth mold units being housed in the housing portion [[soas]] so as to be movable along the predetermined axis with respect to said combined first and second mold units; and

said third mold unit including a guide projection forming portion, a projection, and at least one pin, said guide projection forming portion having an inner surface and a bottom surface and extending along the predetermined axis, said projection having a side surface and extending along the predetermined axis, and said at least one pin extending along the predetermined axis.

18. (Previously presented) A mold according to claim 15, wherein said third mold unit has a vent reaching a surface of said third mold unit from at least one of a bottom surface and inner surface of the guide projection forming portion.

19. (Original) A mold according to claim 16, wherein said third mold unit has a vent extending from at least one of the bottom surface and inner surface of each guide projection forming portion to a surface of said third mold unit.

20. (Previously presented) A mold according to claim 15, wherein the pin of said third mold unit has a tapered distal end portion.

21. (Previously presented) A mold according to claim 15, wherein the inner surface and bottom portion of said guide projection forming portion have chromium nitride coatings.

22. (Original) A method of manufacturing an optical connector ferrule, comprising the steps of:

preparing said mold according to claim 15;

providing a molding resin into said mold to form said ferrule; and

inspecting a position of the fiber accommodating hole with respect to that of the first guide projection to screen said ferrule having passed the inspection and said ferrule having failed to pass the inspection.

23. (Original) A method of manufacturing an optical connector ferrule, comprising the steps of:

preparing said mold according to claim 16;

providing a molding resin into said mold to form said ferrule; and

inspecting a position of the fiber accommodating hole with respect to that of the first guide projection of said ferrule to screen said ferrule having passed the inspection and said ferrule having failed to pass the inspection.

24. (Original) A method of manufacturing an optical connector ferrule, comprising the steps of:

preparing said mold according to claim 17;

providing a molding resin into said mold to form said ferrule; and

inspecting a position of the fiber accommodating hole with respect to that of the first guide projection of said ferrule to screen said ferrule having passed the inspection and said ferrule having failed to pass the inspection.

Claim 25 and 26 (Cancelled).